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RAMSEY
URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL



ANNUAL REPORT
OF THE
MEDICAL OFFICER
OF HEALTH

UPON THE

SANITARY CONDITIONS OF THE DISTRICT
DURING THE YEAR 1958.



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RAMSEY URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL.

MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL.

Chairman : F. G. Cooke,
F. T. Allen. R. Bedford, J. R. Bridgestock, T. Edgley,
C. W. Green, H. W. Haddon, G. S. O. Jennings,
E. H. C. Jones, A. E. Papworth, A. J. Robinson,
S. Senior.

STAFF :

MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH

F. D. F. STEEDE, M.B., B.Ch., D.P.H.
(Resigned 31/7/58)

P. V. CANT, M.B., Ch.B., D.P.H.
(Commenced 1/9/58)

PUBLIC HEALTH INSPECTOR

G. O. MARCH, A.R.S.H., M.A.P.H.I.

STATISTICS AND SOCIAL CONDITIONS OF THE AREA

Area	...	...	...	...	15,980 acres
Estimated Population (mid-1958)	...				5,830
Number of Inhabited Houses end					
				of 1958	1,845
Rateable Value	...	...	...		£47,045
Value of Penny Rate	...	...	...		£183

TO THE RAMSEY URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL

Mr. Chairman and Gentlemen,

I have pleasure in submitting my first Annual Report on the sanitary conditions of the District for the year ending 31st December, 1958.

The District is almost entirely devoted to agriculture, the town itself acting as a centre for the outlying areas, the chief of which are Ramsey St. Mary's, Mereside, Forty Foot, and the Heights. The agricultural land consists largely of fens which were reclaimed several hundred years ago. This land is extremely flat, and is drained by dykes, there being several pumping stations in the area.

Under conditions such as these it is difficult to provide a sewerage system to the outlying areas. Here pail closets are mostly used, and there is a weekly collection of night soil. Some houses however have septic tanks or cesspools and the Council provide a free emptying service for these. Where septic tanks are used a difficulty arises in dealing with the effluent. The fen soil is excellent agriculturally, but only lies in a thin layer over clay. This means that to dispose of effluent a really adequate soak-away is required, or the ground becomes sodden and sour. In several cases the soak-aways are too near to the dykes, and sewage leaks from them into the dykes and a nuisance is created. I am very glad to be able to report however that during the past year works have begun which will supply a proper sewerage scheme to the whole of the Town area, and a sewage works is now under construction. When this is completed I am sure that it will be a tremendous asset to the Town, and will, owing to better hygiene being possible in food establishments and in the home, help to reduce the number of cases of mild gastro-enteritis which occur from time to time.

The general health of the District has been very good, and there have been no epidemics. The area was fortunate in having no poliomyelitis during the year, although there were some cases nearby. The year was marked by a strong drive by the County Council in poliomyelitis immunisation, and I cannot recommend too urgently that all persons under twenty-six years of age should be done. There has now been no diphtheria in Ramesy for many years. This is largely due to the excellence of the prophylactics available for immunising against this disease. I most strongly urge parents to continue to have their children immunised as it is only whilst we have a sufficient percentage of our children immunised that diphtheria is being kept at bay.

Finally I should like to thank the Members of the Council, their officers and staff for their kindness and help to me on taking up this new appointment.

VITAL STATISTICS.

Live Births	...	...	...	...	...	101
Live birth rate per 1,000 population	...	...	...	...	...	17.3
Still-births	...	...	...	...	...	2
Still-births rate per 1,000 total births	...	...	...	...	...	19.4
Total live and still-births	...	...	...	...	...	103
Infant deaths	...	...	...	...	...	2
Infant mortality rate per 1,000 live births	...	total	19.8			
" " " " " "		legitimate	21.1			
" " " " " "		illegitimate	Nil			
Neo Natal " " " "						
(first four weeks)	...	...	...	...	...	19.8
Illegitimate live births per cent of total live births	...	5.9				
Maternal deaths (including abortion)	...	Nil				
Maternal mortality rate per 1,000 live and still-births	...	Nil				
Death Rate per 1,000 population	...	...	...	...	9.4	

Infant Deaths	1953	1954	1955	1956	1957	1958
Actual No. of Deaths	3	2	3	3	3	2
Rates all Infants per 1,000 Live Births	25.6	18.5	28.6	26.1	28.8	19.8

Deaths from Cancer (all ages)	...	...	...	11
Deaths from Measles (all ages)	...	...	...	Nil
Deaths from Whooping Cough (all ages)	...	...	...	Nil
Deaths from Diarrhœa (under 2 years)	...	...	...	Nil

Comparison of Rates with those of England and Wales

	Per 1000 Population.				Per 1000 live births	Per 1000 total Births
	Live Births	Adjusted Birth Rate	Crude Death Rate	Adjusted Death Rate	Infantile Mortality	Still Births
Ramsey U. D.	17.3	17.3	9.4	10.2	19.8	19.4
England & Wales	16.4	16.4	11.7	11.7	22.5	21.6

The following table shows the classification of deaths from all causes, Registrar General's figures.

Causes of Death.						M.	F.	Total
						33	22	55
1.	Tuberculosis, respiratory	...	..	—	—	—	—	—
2.	Tuberculosis, other	...	...	...	—	—	—	—
3.	Syphilitic disease	...	...	...	—	—	—	—
4.	Diphtheria	...	...	...	—	—	—	—
5.	Whooping cough	...	...	—	—	—	—	—
6.	Meningococcal infections	...	...	—	—	—	—	—
7.	Acute Poliomyelitis	..	...	...	—	—	—	—
8.	Measles	...	...	...	—	—	—	—
9.	Other infective and parasitic diseases				—	—	—	—
10.	Malignant neoplasm, stomach	...			2	—	2	
11.	Malignant neoplasm, lung, bronchus.				2	—	2	
12.	Malignant neoplasm, breast	...	...	—	—	—	—	—
13.	Malignant neoplasm, uterus	...	...	—	—	—	—	—
14.	Other malignant & lymphatic neoplasms				5	2	7	
15.	Leukæmia, aleukæmia	...	...	...	—	—	—	—
16.	Diabetes	...	..	...	—	1	1	
17.	Vascular lesions of nervous system	...			2	4	6	
18.	Coronary disease, angina	...	...	4	3	7		
19.	Hypertension with heart disease	...		—	1	1		
20.	Other heart disease	...	...	4	6	10		
21.	Other circulatory disease	...	...	—	2	2		
22.	Influenza	...	...	...	—	—	—	—
23.	Pneumonia	...	...	...	2	1	3	
24.	Bronchitis	...	...	...	1	—	1	
25.	Other disease of respiratory system	...		—	—	—	—	—
26.	Ulcer of stomach and duodenum	...		2	—	2		
27.	Gastritis, enteritis and diarrhœa	...		—	1	1		
28.	Nephritis and nephrosis	...	...	—	—	—	—	—
29.	Hyperplasia of prostate	...	...	3	—	3		
30.	Pregnancy, childbirth, abortion	...		—	—	—	—	—
31.	Congenital malformations	...	...	—	—	—	—	—
32.	Other defined and ill-defined diseases			2	1	3		
33.	Motor vehicle accidents	...	...	—	—	—	—	—
34.	All other accidents	...	...	4	—	4		
35.	Suicide	...	...	—	—	—	—	—
36.	Homicide and operations of War	...		—	—	—	—	—

REPORT OF THE SURVEYOR AND PUBLIC HEALTH INSPECTOR FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31st DECEMBER, 1958

TO THE MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH

Sir,

I beg to submit my report for the year ending 31st December, 1958.

Housing :

Action has been taken for Closing Orders and Demolition Orders when possible but a comprehensive programme of Slum Clearance cannot be proceeded with owing to lack of re-housing accommodation.

It is estimated that there are still 130 houses in the district which cannot be repaired at reasonable expense and it is increasingly difficult to provide accommodation at a rent which the displaced families can afford.

There is no statutory overcrowding in the area, although there are cases where families have, due to natural increase, become undesirably crowded in their houses.

Inspection of Dwelling Houses during the year :

Total number of dwelling houses inspected for housing defects (under Public Health or Housing Acts)	31
Number of inspections made for the purpose	58
Number of houses found to be in a state so dangerous or injurious to health as to be unfit for human habitation	8
Number of houses (exclusive of those referred to under the preceeding sub-head) found not to be in all respects reasonably fit for human habitation	23

Remedy of defects without service of formal notices :

Number of dwelling houses rendered fit in consequence of informal action by the Local Authority or their officers	4
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Action under Statutory Powers :

Number of dwelling houses in respect of which Demolition Orders were made. (Housing Act, 1936, Section 11) ...	4
Number of dwelling houses demolished in pursuance of Demolition Orders	4
Number of separate tenements in respect of which Closing Orders were made	4
Number of families displaced	1

New Housing :

No new Council Houses were completed during the year but six one bedroom bungalows for elderly people were under erection. Negotiations are in progress to acquire further land for housing sites.

The Council have a total of 518 houses including 20 pre-fabricated bungalows.

12 houses at Ramsey St. Mary's were modernised by the conversion of E.C.'s to W.C.'s, together with a proper drainage system.

There are still 25 huts at the Wood Lane Camp occupied for temporary housing purposes.

16 houses were erected during the year by private enterprise.

Improvements Grants :

The Council approved applications for Grant in respect of improvements to 10 houses, and for 1 case of conversion from one house into two houses.

Works of improvement on 10 houses and the conversion of one house into two were completed during the year.

Nuisances :

Abated as a result of informal action	...	...	...	18
Analysis of complaints received :				
Premises	...	...	...	6
Accumulation of Refuse	...			4
Drains	...	...	...	5
Polluted Ditches	...	...	...	3
				<hr/> 18

Inspections and Visits :

Highways	...	...	...	...	...	...	257
Water Supply	...	...	...	...	...	...	715
Housing Maintenance	...	...	...	...	...	...	1,113
New Buildings	...	...	...	...	...	...	160
Public Health Acts	...	...	...	...	...	...	102
Drain Tests	...	...	...	...	...	...	62
Housing Act	...	...	...	...	...	...	58
Meat Inspections	...	...	...	...	...	...	327
Wood Lane Camp	...	...	...	...	...	...	41
Food and Drugs Acts	...	...	...	...	...	...	6
Factory Acts	...	...	...	...	...	...	11
Refuse Collection and Disposal	...	...	...	...	...	...	25
Sewers	...	...	...	...	...	...	36
Cemetery	...	...	...	...	...	...	39
Rodent Control	...	...	...	...	...	...	1
Public Conveniences	...	...	...	...	...	...	1
Clean Food Inspections	...	...	...	...	...	...	4
Moveable Dwellings	...	...	...	...	...	...	42

Civil Defence ...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1
Street Lighting	...	...	...	...	...	...	6
Playing Fields	...	...	...	...	...	...	7
Infectious and Notifiable Diseases	...	...	...	...	...	...	15
Petrol Storage	...	...	...	...	...	...	2
Miscellaneous	...	...	...	...	...	...	165
Total ...							3,196

Closets :

Number of houses at the end of the year with W.C.'s	...	1,072
" " " Pail Closets	...	759
" " " Privy Vaults	...	14
Number of W.C.'s constructed during the year for new houses	... ..	16
Number of W.C.'s newly constructed for old property	...	28

Milk Supply :

Three milk distributors are registered and the following Supplementary Licences for the sale of milk were granted during the year:—

Tuberculin Tested	Pasteurised	Sterilised
2	5	2

Water Supply :

Samples from the water supply from the Ramsey and St. Ives Joint Water Board are taken at regular intervals and forwarded to the Pathological Laboratory, Memorial Hospital, Peterborough.

Number of water samples taken from main supply	...	26
Number of satisfactory water samples	... ..	26
Number of unsatisfactory water samples	... ..	Nil

The demand for water is steadily increasing, the average daily consumption at the end of the year being 130,000 gallons which represents 26 gallons per head per day.

Poor pressure is experienced in the higher parts of the district and difficulty is had in maintaining an adequate supply during peak demand in dry weather.

Meat and Food Inspection :

Slaughtering is being carried out at 3 slaughterhouses in the area.

The following table shows the results of the meat inspection service:—

Number of slaughterhouses on register	...	...	...	3
Number of visits for meat inspection	...	...	...	327

Carcases Inspected and Condemned :

			Cattle excluding Cows	Cows	Calves	Sheep and Lambs	Pigs
No. killed	...	...	122 +	5	4	278 +	3023 +
No. inspected	...	...	122	5	4	278	3023

All diseases except

Tuberculosis:—

Whole carcasses condemned	—	—	—	—	2
---------------------------	-----	-----	---	---	---	---	---

Carcases of which some part or organ was condemned	...	14	—	—	—	—	7
--	-----	----	---	---	---	---	---

Percentage of the number inspected affected with disease other than tuberculosis	11.4%	—	—	—	.3%
--	-----	-----	-------	---	---	---	-----

Tuberculosis only:—

Whole carcasses condemned	—	—	—	—	—
---------------------------	-----	-----	---	---	---	---	---

Carcases of which some part or organ was condemned	...	1	—	—	—	—	4
--	-----	---	---	---	---	---	---

Percentage of the number inspected with tuberculosis8%	—	—	—	—	.1%
--	-----	-----	---	---	---	---	-----

Total weight of meat condemned	1,436 lbs.
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Total weight of other food condemned	54 lbs.
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Cysticercosis was not found during the year.

Food Premises :

(i) The number of food premises in the area by type of business are as under:—

Butchers' Shops	...	...	...	...	10
Grocers and General Stores	...	...	...	...	19
Greengrocers	...	...	...	...	7
Bakers	...	...	...	...	6
Confectioners	...	...	...	...	3
Fish Premises	...	...	...	...	4
Cafes, Restaurants, Hotels	...	...	...	...	5

Total	...	54
-------	-----	----

- (ii) Number of Premises registered under the Food and Drugs Act 25
- (iii) Number of inspections of registered food premises ... 10
- (iv) There has not been a food hygiene educational course during the year. Proprietors are aware of the provisions of the Food Hygiene Regulations. They are at a disadvantage at present because of the unsatisfactory sewerage system, which is now being rectified.
- (v) Condemned food is buried at the tip.
- (vi) Usually small quantities of food are examined, and the lot condemned.
- (vii) There are no Ice Cream manufacturers in the area, it is all pre-packed.
- (viii) There have been no prosecutions under the Food Hygiene Regulations during the year.

Sewerage and Sewage Disposal

Work commenced on the new sewerage scheme for the Town Area in April this year. The construction of the works and the laying of sewers is in progress and it is hoped that the scheme will be completed within the contract period of 2½ years.

Factories Act, 1937

Total number of Factories (including Bakehouses)	23
Number of visits during the year	11

Refuse Collection :

Refuse is collected in the Town Area weekly and on a fortnightly basis from Ramsey St. Mary's, The Heights, Ramsey Mereside and Forty Foot Bridge by Contractors.

The Stocking Fen Tip is now used for composting night soil and refuse is disposed of by controlled tipping in the disused pits at Brick Kilns Farm.

The collection of night soil is carried out by contract twice weekly in the Town and weekly in the outside areas. Although this is an absolute necessity, it is a system which is full of complaints and one which can only be abolished by the provision of a proper sewerage scheme. Difficulty is still being experienced in the disposal of night soil; at the present time it is composted with straw, etc.

The average cost of collection and disposal of night soil and refuse is 10.1d. per pail and 6.25d. per bin respectively.

The Council provide a free cesspool and septic tank emptying service where required, 73 being emptied during the year.

Moveable Dwellings :

During the year 9 licences were granted to erect, station and use moveable dwellings under Section 269 of the Public Health Act, 1936. Moveable dwellings are inspected from time to time to ensure that the sanitary arrangements are satisfactory.

The principle difficulty is the control of caravans occupied by seasonal workers on farms which park on roadsides and unauthorised sites and cause a considerable nuisance mainly due to lack of sanitary accommodation. There is a demand in the area for properly controlled sites for these workers and I feel that the employers of the labour could assist in making land available together with sanitary facilities, etc.

Rodent Control :

A rodent control service is provided for private and business premises in the area under the Prevention of Damage by Pests Act, 1949. The rodent operator inspected 395 properties, made 650 visits and carried out 80 treatments in cases of infestation.

Cemetery :

The Council took over the duties of the Ramsey Burial Board on 1st April, 1958. The main entrance drive has been kerbed and surfaced and further improvements including drainage are planned to be carried out.

General :

This year has seen the commencement of the long awaited sewerage scheme for the Town Area which, when completed, will enable the insanitary collection of night soil to be terminated. The Council will now be able to carry out an extensive programme over the next few years of slum clearance, new housing development and the improvement in sanitary standards of existing property.

In conclusion I would express my appreciation of the interest and support of the Chairman and Members of the Council, Dr. F. D. F. Steede and yourself and the co-operation of the Council Staff.

G. O. MARCH,
Surveyor and Public Health Inspector.

The following table gives the incidence of notifiable diseases (other than tuberculosis) in the area during 1958.

[illegible]

TUBERCULOSIS

Age Periods	NEW CASES				DEATHS			
	Pulmonary		Non Pulmonary		Pulmonary		Non Pulmonary	
	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.
0—1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
1—5	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
5—15	2	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
15—25	2	1	—	—	—	—	—	—
25—35	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
35—45	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
45—55	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
55—65	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
65 and upwards	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
TOTAL :—	4	1	—	—	—	—	—	—

I am,

Your obedient Servant,

PHILIP V. CANT,

Medical Officer of Health.

Council Offices,
High Street,
Old Fletton,

Phone : Peterborough 4027

